

# Bube language

**Bube, Bohobé or Bube–Benga** (Bobe, Bubi), is a Bantu or Bantoid language spoken by the Bubi, a Bantu people native to, and once the primary inhabitants of, Bioko Island in Equatorial Guinea. The language was brought to Bioko from continental Africa more than three thousand years ago when the Bubi began arriving on the island.<sup>[4]</sup>

It has around 50,000 speakers, with three variants: North, South and Central-East. It is noted for its tonal character and the divergence of words by gender. The language is also spoken by Bubi native to Gabon and Cameroon.

The Bube language is divided into six different dialects that vary in the northern and southern regions of Bioko Island. For example, in the North, people speak *Rebola* and its variations: *Basile*, *Banapa* and *Basupa*. However, in the North-East, *Bakake* is spoken.

Bube is also spoken in a small area on the mainland closest to the island, where speakers are shifting to Wumboko.<sup>[5]</sup> This has been reported as "Bube", "Bubia" or "Wovea" (see Wovea people).

The first Bube-to-English primer was authored in 1875 by William Barleycorn, a colonial era Primitive Methodist missionary of Igbo and Fernandino descent, while he was serving in the Bubi village of Basupu. An official language dictionary and grammar guide was published by the ethnic Bubi scholar Justo Boleká Boleká.

<b>Bube</b>	
<b>Native to</b>	Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Cameroon
<b>Ethnicity</b>	Bubi, Wovea
<b>Native speakers</b>	51,000 (2011) <sup>[1]</sup>
<b>Language family</b>	<p>Niger–Congo</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Atlantic–Congo</li> <li>▪ Volta-Congo</li> <li>▪ Benue–Congo</li> <li>▪ Bantoid</li> <li>▪ Southern Bantoid</li> <li>▪ Bantu (Zone A.30)</li> <li>▪ perhaps Mbam?</li> <li>▪ <b>Bube</b></li> </ul>
<b>Language codes</b>	
<b>ISO 639-3</b>	bvb – inclusive code Individual code: bbx – Bubia (Wovea)
<b>Glottolog</b>	bube1242 ( <a href="http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/bube1242">http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/bube1242</a> ) <sup>[2]</sup>
<b>Guthrie code</b>	A.31, A.221 <sup>[3]</sup>

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## Other names

Other names and forms of the name include Bubé, eVoové, eBubée, Bhubhi, Bubi, Ibubi, Ihubhi, Pove and Eviia.

## Phonology

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### Vowels

Bube has 7 vowels that can be either short or long:

Vowel phonemes

	<u>Front (short/long)</u>	<u>Back (short/long)</u>
<u>Close</u>	i i: (ɨ)	u u: (ũ)
<u>Close-mid</u>	e e: (ẽ)	o o: (õ)
<u>Open-mid</u>	ɛ ɛ: (ɛ̃)	ɔ ɔ: (ɔ̃)
<u>Open</u>	a a: (ã)	

The nasal vowels are allophones of respective oral vowels.

### Consonants

Bube has 20 consonants. Some of them are prenasalized:

Consonant Phonemes

	<u>Labial</u>	<u>Dental</u>	<u>Alveolar</u>	<u>Palatal</u>	<u>Velar</u>	<u>Glottal</u>
<u>Nasal</u>	m		n	ŋ		
<u>Stop</u>	p b mp mb		t d nt nd	c ɟ nc ɲ ʃ	k g	?
<u>Fricative</u>	f v		s ns			h
<u>Approximant</u>		l		j	w	
<u>Pharyngeal</u>		r				

### Numbers

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Number	Northern Bube	Northwestern Bube	Southern Bube
1	buule	buule	muule
2	eppa	eppa	memba
3	betta	betta	metta
4	yeele	yeele	myeeme
5	betto	betto	metto
6	ra'a 6	ra'a 6	metto na muule 5+1
7	ra'a la buule 6+1	ra'a la buule 6+1	metto na memba 5+2
8	yeele ketoppa 4x2	ra'a la eppa 6+2	metto na metta 5+3
9	yeele ketoppa la buule 4x2+1	baa buule ka yo 10-1	metto na myeene 5+4
10	yo	yo	myo

[6]

## See also

- [Benga language](#)

## References

1. Bube (<https://www.ethnologue.com/18/language/bvb/>) at *Ethnologue* (18th ed., 2015) Bubia (Wovea) (<https://www.ethnologue.com/18/language/bbx/>) at *Ethnologue* (18th ed., 2015)
2. Hammarström, Harald; Forkel, Robert; Haspelmath, Martin, eds. (2017). "Bube" (<http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/bube1242>). *Glottolog 3.0*. Jena, Germany: Max Planck Institute for the Science of Human History.
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5. Harald Hammarström (2013) Review of the *Ethnologue*, 16th Ed.
6. C. Junyent, *Las lenguas del mundo*, p. 66

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- Biddulph, Joseph, Fernandian (1988) *The Bubi Bantu language of Bioco/Fernando Po*. Pontypridd, Wales: Languages Information Centre, WorldCat no. 17838738.

## External links

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